

**What is claimed is:**

1. A fibrous composite article comprising fibrous material having an average fiber length of less than about 2 millimeters (mm) and a cured, binder resin, wherein the fibrous material comprises a species selected from the group consisting of hemp hurd, kenaf hurd, vegetable bamboo culms, and mixtures thereof.
2. The article of claim 1 comprising fibrous material having an average fiber length of about 0.3 mm to about 1.6 mm and said binder resin, is present in an amount of about 2 wt.% to about 8 wt.%, based on the weight of the fibrous material prior to cure.
3. The article of claim 1, wherein the fibrous material has a specific gravity of about 1 to about 1.2.
4. The article of claim 1, wherein the thermosetting binder resin is selected from the group consisting of amino resins, modified amino resins, phenolic resins, modified phenolic resins, and mixtures thereof.
5. The article of claim 1, wherein the fibrous material has a pre-consolidation moisture content of about 3 wt.% to about 5 wt.%.
6. The article of claim 1, wherein the fibrous material has a pre-consolidation moisture content of about 4 wt.% to about 4.5 wt.%.
7. The article of claim 1, further comprising a sizing agent in an amount of about 1 wt.% to about 3 wt.%, based on the weight of the fibrous material prior to cure.

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8. The article of claim 1, further comprising a sizing agent in an amount of about 1.5 wt.% to about 2.5 wt.%, based on the weight of the fibrous material prior to cure.

9. The article of claim 2, wherein the fibrous material comprises hemp hurd and the fibers have an average fiber length of about 0.5 mm to about 0.75 mm and the article contains the cured, binder resin in an amount of about 4 wt.% to about 6 wt.%, based on the weight of the fibrous material prior to cure.

10. The article of claim 9 having a smoothness value of about 2.1 to about 3.8.

11. The article of claim 9 having an internal bond strength of about 140 pounds per square inch (psi) to about 250 psi.

12. The article of claim 9 having a cleavage value of about 45 pounds to about 65 pounds.

13. The article of claim 2, wherein the fibrous material comprises kenaf hurd and the fibers have an average fiber length of about 0.5 mm to about 0.75 mm and the article contains the cured, binder resin in an amount of about 4 wt.% to about 6 wt.%, based on the weight of the fibrous material prior to cure.

14. The article of claim 13 having a smoothness value of about 2 to about 5.

15. The article of claim 14 having a smoothness value of about 2.5 to about 4.2.

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25. The article of claim 24 having a smoothness value of

26. The article of claim 22 having an internal bond strength

27. The article of claim 26 having an internal bond strength

28. The article of claim 27 having an internal bond strength

29. The article of claim 22 having a cleavage value of about

30. The article of claim 29 having a cleavage value of about



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45. The method of claim 31, wherein the fiber comprises a bamboo culm.

46. The method of claim 45, wherein the fiber comprises a mixture of a vegetable bamboo species selected from the group consisting of: high-node (*Phyllostachys promineus*), thunder (*P. praecox* f. *pubescens*), and (*P. iridescens*), and mixtures thereof.

47. The method of claim 45, wherein the consolidation step

- (a) a first press period having a press cycle time of about 20 seconds to about 30 seconds,
- (b) a breathing period, having a cycle time of 10 seconds to about 15 seconds; and,
- (c) a second press period, having a press cycle time of about 35 seconds to about 75 seconds.

48. The method of claim 47, wherein said first and second  
utilize a pressure in a range of about 700 psi to about 1200 psi.

49. The method of claim 48, wherein the pressure is in a range of 800 psi to 1100 psi.